



ACHIM SZEPANSKI 2022-05-10

## NICK LAND'S TELEOPLEXIA AND CAPITAL

ECONOFICTION,  
MASHINES

ACCELERATIONISM, CAPITAL, FINANCE, KAIROS, TECHNOMIC  
TIME, TELEOPLEXIA

Nick Land writes, "Acceleration is technomic time." (Land 2014: 95) The etymological reference here aims at "tech" on the one hand (from Proto-Celtic tegos, from Proto-Indo-European tegos ("cover, roof") = house) – and on the other hand at "nomic", a word that in Greek means "law, custom" or the game in which one models certain aspects of a legal system when players make their moves and simultaneously change the rules of the game with them.

In Land's work, the term "technomic time" refers to a self-modeling capitalist system or its games that reside in digital machines and today take the form of simulated algorithmics to eat their way through the accelerated rhythms of a self-manifesting intelligence in endless random play. It is precisely this propagation of time, manifested in the current accumulation of capital, that Land attempts to describe with the term acceleration. In the course of capital accumulation and its processes of capitalization, Land argues, technological resources are increasingly diverted from consumption to the improvement of production and circulation techniques, so that while it is still possible to speak of a distinction between economy and technology in purely analytical terms, in reality the two areas can be described as co-components of capital. (Ibid.: 95) Land's confusion at this point consists precisely in conceptually separating capital and economy, while we assume that economy can only exist as that of capital. Precisely for this reason, one does not have to ask the dialectical question at all, how capital can be itself and at the same time another (economy). For a conceptual, non-dialectical determination of capital this must mean to understand capital as a radically unilateral "logic", in which two terms are not unified by a third term (abstract labor), but are determined by the first term (money as capital). The terms (the second term is a commodity, production, labor power, etc.) and the relation money-commodity-money' are immanent to the first term (capital). The second term is always already a unilateral clone of the first term, which means nothing else than that one ever already has to assume a monetary theory of value or capital theory. And this as determination-in-the-last-instance, so that capital is to be thought a priori as total capital (and not to be assumed from capital in general). And to the concept of capital would have to be added the mathem of capital, that is, the (conceptual) capital and its economic mathem (differential calculus) would have to be superposed. The vectorial dimension of capital is thus complemented by the mathem of economics.

Acceleration articulates for Land an artificial intelligence or a singularity that is immanent in the processes of a self-modifying game in intelligent time. The time of pure acceleration begins precisely when, in escalating neo-capitalism, the enormous complex of information, data and knowledge grows together with so-called artificial intelligence, and only then, according to Land, are we dealing with an indeterminate time of kairos or a process time without end, which does not take place in chronological or everyday time, but in the eventful moment itself, whereby in kairos the qualitative forces of an immanent materialistic libidinous complex ek-sist in their singular manifestation. (Chronos as the god of time was imagined in Greek myth as a god with three heads, that of a man, lion, and bull. Chronos and his consorts circled the original world egg in their coils and divided it to form the ordered universe of earth, sea and sky. The Greeks, however, possessed another conception of time, that of kairos. Kairos is an ancient Greek word that means to seize the right or opportune moment. Heiner Mühlmann, in the course of his determination of tyche technique, a craft that processes chance, has found the following catchy definition for kairos: "The kairos is the crisis of a tyche technical oasis phase." (Mühlmann 2013: 27) While chronos alludes to a sequential time, the kairos signifies a temporal derailment, the moment of an indeterminate time in which anything can happen. What happens when kairos is referred to ultimately depends on the one who speaks. While chronos is quantitatively

determined, kairos is a qualitative determination).

Two opposing trend lines have to be considered here, on the one hand the de-acceleration of capital, which expresses itself in the tendency of the general rate of profit to fall and leads to the indebtedness of states, households and companies, and on the other hand the acceleration of finance capital, which is based on computerization and cybernetic technologies and essentially also creates the new image of acceleration. However, the latter precisely does not lead to the opening of new spaces; for Land, this kind of acceleration is clearly related to the closing of the horizon in capitalism – sweeping horizontally across the globe and penetrating vertically into every pore of social life, we are dealing with a totalitarian immersion in the immanence of capital, although the processes of acceleration could also lead to the transcendence of capital. However, Lyotard's statement, which the accelerationists take up again today, namely that the flirtation with acceleration could produce a very own *jouissance* (of resistance), did not prove true. The accelerationists' use of the word *jouissance* might also suggest the following: An enjoyment that is so intense that it is indistinguishable from pain, that is, a kind of perverse masochism.

According to Nick Land, the totalitarian dominance of capital is a complete teleological catastrophe. The transclassical capital-machine enables the acceleration of the linear operation of digital images, writings, musics – they are present everywhere at once, retrievable and reversible at any time, they come out of a contingent abundance of possibilities, as it were, from the future into the present; thus future and possibility are to be considered synonyms, as are time and probability. Present is the realization of possibilities. Land writes that the present situation only makes sense when seen from the perspective of a future observer traveling back in time, and this with respect to a singularity, but one that is only in the making. He ironizes the already collapsing civilization as “meltdown acceleration, cyberian invasion, schizotechnics, K-tactics, bottom-up bacterial warfare, efficient neo-nihilism, voodoo antihumanism, synthetic feminization, rhizomatics, connectionism, Kuang contagion, viral amnesia, micro-insurgency, wintermutation, neotropy, dissipator proliferation, and lesbian vampirism, among other designations (frequently pornographic, abusive, or terroristic in nature)”-(Fanged, KL 6134).

Land uses terms such as electrical circuits, cybernetic expected value, and computer algorithms to describe governance and its compensatory relations within an ongoing process of hypercapitalization that operates at multiple levels, from mathematical design to biotechnology to the entertainment industry. This process is a kind of cumulative and accelerating feedback process, but it is not possible without major disruptions, explosions, and traps, which in turn are designed to control these disruptions. Consider Fukushima and the corresponding disaster policies. Controlled explosions are what Land considers necessary in this framework, and he logically emphasizes the need for governance of the highly explosive forces of modernity. Today, the processes of control take place uniformly, that is, tied to chaos-theoretical ways of thinking or those of contingency, which, however, remain committed to statistical-mechanical equilibrium, so that disturbances in the machinic systems remain compensable, in that probability-based capital-technological machines keep the system governable. This indeed reveals a socio-economic normalization whose critique, according to Land, is provided by accelerationism. That

secondary process of economic normalization, which attempts to stabilize what Land sees as the more primal unrest in systems qua various compensatory mechanisms, drags with it the legacy of technical rationality as objectified domination, to use Marxist jargon. Land speaks here of the inert telos that accelerationists criticize when it is precisely the left faction that pushes for an uncompensable disruption, but insofar as this remains unrealizable, the left itself may only be considered an eternal critique of modernity. ("The respective rulers, however, are the heirs of all who have ever been victorious ... Whoever has been victorious up to this day marches along in the triumphal procession that leads the rulers of today over those who today lie on the ground. The spoils are carried along in the triumphal procession, as has always been the custom. They are called cultural goods." Walter Benjamin)

Land is concerned at this point with the attitude of the last man, which perhaps corresponds with Sloterdijk's remark about modernity as the production of the last man in the Nietzschean sense. To further twist the twisted intentionality of modernity under the cybernetic-capitalist regime, which is articulated primarily as the permanent self-generation and self-referentiality of the machine, Land uses the neologism teleoplexia: it is an inverted, emergent, and complicated teleology that culminates in an intense magnitude that is to be set identical to machinic-cybernetic intelligence, i. e. complexity, connectivity, extropy, etc. The first achievement of teleoplexia or accelerationism is to attempt to "measure" this intensive quantity, which is expressed economically as "productivity, competitiveness, and capital investment value" (Land 2014: 99). In this context, Land identifies capitalization with natural-historical reality, which for him is inseparable from teleoplexia as an intelligent economic phenomenon, with teleoplexia further complicating economic states of affairs through the factors of commercial relativism, historical virtuality, and systemic reflexivity. Surprisingly, Land describes the virtual momet of capitalization reasonably accurately:

"Capitalization is therefore indistinguishable from a commodification of potentials through which modern history (teleoplex) tilts toward an ever greater virtualization that operationalizes science fiction scenarios as integral components of production systems. Values that do not "yet" exist except as probalibistic estimates or risk structures are given command over economic (and thus social) processes that inevitably devalue the actual. Under teleoplexic guidance, ontological realism is decoupled from the present, making the question "What is real?" increasingly superfluous." (Ibid: 100-101) And further, "There is only the self-qualification of teleoplexia or cybernetic intensity, precisely what financial markets are (ultimately) good for."

(So, we should assume that the synthetic financial assets have a much higher impact power compared to the classical financial instruments (credit) as well as the classical commodities, because the size (of economic objects) and the impact power related to it ever already turns out to be a dependent variable of the relations and the gradual connections of the economic objects, where this is to be understood as a structural dominant. At the same time, it is the virtualization-updating-interconnections of money capital that process as abstract risks and probabilities in order to optionally monetize utilization directed to the future right now, thus actually degrading the real economy to a derivative).

Land finally asks how teleoplexia, as a research program permanently ready to take

measurements and evaluations of technological progress, could capture and further accelerate the explosion of teleoplexic cybernetic intelligence more intensively and effectively than has been possible so far with conventional methods of calculating price movements, which estimate rather than calculate the total value of capital using stochastic methods. Calculation can only proceed if the valuation of economic wealth is transformed into a new performativity that takes care of the self-quantification of teleoplexia or cybernetic intensity, and this, in turn, can only be established through the topology of nomadic financial markets. In doing so, however, prices and price systems would have to be discovered that would be compatible with “their own maximally accelerated technogenesis, thus leading capital into mechanical automation, self-replication, self-improvement, and the way out called intelligence production.” (Ibid.: 102) The price system ultimately culminates in technological-self-reflexive hypercognition. For this purpose, it would be necessary to coordinate the measurements of cybernetic intensity with those of capital compositions, capital density, and capital concentration, which could not refer only to the outputs of the classical-legal enterprises, for this would still leave out, for example, the area of reproductive activities in private households. However, it could be objected that the principle of voluntary associations remains dependent on autonomous motivations. If quantifying measurement instruments and monetary incentives are integrated into these areas, this can only lead to the abandonment of autonomous motives. The process of expanding the definition of GDP to include all forms of work, including unpaid work, as a new indicator should therefore be viewed critically.

For Land, a philosophy of camouflage is needed that is able to decipher the teleoplexic forces or agencies that are already dormant in the global networks, in order to eventually promote and boost them. And Land, in turn, indicates various factors that could inhibit the movement of the teleoplexic AI Singularity in the form of local defects or of immense sabotages, and for him these are the states and their intelligence agencies, corporations, mega-cities and power-based networks, or even leftist accelerationists. Indeed, these would tend to inhibit the market-specific signals of price movements and thus disrupt the important trends that could lead to condensed teleoplex intelligence. And last, Land tells us that the teleoplexic movement must prevail because capitalism simply possessed no other choice: demise or technogenesis. However, the moment could also occur when teleoplexic systems separate themselves entirely from the humanoids of the Occident, either in the embodiment of postbiological creatures that evolve self-referentially from themselves, or as advanced artificial intelligent agencies. These would be so far removed from all human concepts, ideas and notions that they would still be manipulable beyond the Infoborg only with their own alien minds, or perhaps could still be used as tools before choosing their own escape lines from the networks to live their second Infoborg life in real time. One could think far away already of Google and DARPA, which are now so interconnected, and this because of the monstrous technologies they use. It would be easy to imagine that from them could emerge those systems about which we do not yet have any knowledge to protect us from them.

Nick Land, when writing about geopolitical fragmentation, for example, seems problematically open to right-wing tendencies of an otherwise more culturally argumentative neoliberal faction of the Western community of values. Super-rich and their pundits today read the right-wing

accelerationist, who argues for hyper-secessionism, for the recognition of micro- and macro-fascisms (nationalism, racism). And keywords like hierarchy, exclusion, secrecy point to the alliance of right and left accelerationists when it comes to propagating a future intelligence. But this is *sui generis* radically uncertain. (The most powerful hype in the agenda of capital tends toward a transhuman and an AI / Robotic regime).

While digital machines currently represent an expression of dictatorial arborescence that corresponds to capital's desire to devalue and simulate human thought, digitality, according to leftist accelerationism, also indicates an open horizon: the potential for radical transformation regarding modes of consciousness, forms of the common, cultures, and music. But can technological machines ever be decoupled from capitalist axiomatics? Can the codes that program our planetary abstractions today be decoupled from the social forms of control? This is one of the questions facing left accelerationism today. It is claimed that it is the universality of the Turing machine that opens up the possibility of reconstituting the conceptual, referential, and compositional capacities of leftist forces by dramatizing the de-imaging of the human through the description and enactment of alien forces. Ostensibly, the abstractions of software today would already link our fragmentarized politics, our atomized solidarities, and our stratified desires. In its virtuality, software refers to universal revision, to the optimization, expansion, and potentiation of the components and capacities of body-brain assemblages. However, there will be no common language between brain and computer, rather both will be involved in the creation of a new abstract machine to produce hitherto unforeseen mutations in the power of thought. The brain will not be replaced by the computer or reduced to a prosthesis by it, but rather its asymptotic, machinic extension and multiplication, perhaps beyond any existing model of recognition. Indeed, then, the mutant character of these abstract machines, yet to be constructed, would indicate their profound capacity to go beyond all previous modalities of a collective expression to generate new (artistic, scientific, philosophical) experiments, a new decoding of topological divisions, to finally generate a new joyful thinking without image, an indivisible science/art/philosophy that is only in the making. This transhuman, leftist position obviously has much to do with German idealism. However, Günther Anders had already pointed out in his self-described discrepancy philosophy that there is a utopianism that can only imagine what it cannot produce, whereas today we live in an inverse utopia – we cannot imagine what we produce. In this sense, left accelerationism's response to Land's fictional construction of a techonomic or teleopexic technogenesis is rather inadequate. Moreover, it is fully within the logic of the anthropocentric, a description that imagines a false complex of human activity whose historical geography is naturalized and whose gravitational field, capital accumulation, is left in invisibility.

(Deleuze is known for his commitment to joyful affirmation and for his distaste for the resentment of negativity. With Deleuze, a canon of joy has virtually been created in recent decades, a cosmos of assemblages generated by infinite processes of differentiation: Deleuze's univocal being inhabited by infinite multiplicities. But there is certainly also a black Deleuze to discover, a revolutionary Deleuze who creates a new color utopia that resides in a generic black universe. This renewed Deleuze generates a counter-canon in which generic science inscribes itself as

negative science fiction).

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